

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 SOFIA 02587 080905Z

20

ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 SY-05 /066 W
----- 039775

O P R 080830Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO AMEMBASSY PRAGUE IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2088
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SOFIA 2587

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OEXC, PINS, BU

SUBJECT: POLITICAL ASPECTS OF LAPO VISIT TO SOFIA

1. TWO POLITICAL OCCURRENCES TOOK PLACE DURING LAPO SOFIA VISIT WHICH NEED TO BE CALLED ESPECIALLY TO EMBASSY PRAGUE'S AND DEPT'S ATTENTION.

2. FIRST AND MINOR ONE TOOK PLACE DURING UNUSUALLY WELL-ATTENDED PRESS CONFERENCE DECEMBER 6. ASKED WHETHER LAPO WOULD TOUR USSR, MEHTA REPLIED GROUP WOULD HAVE LIKED TO GO BUT RUSSIANS HAD SAID THAT WHILE THEY WANTED THE ORCHESTRA, THEY DID NOT WANT HIM. HE PREFERRED TO SAY NOTHING MORE ABOUT THE MATTER. SOMEONE ASKED WHETHER HIS ASSOCIATION WITH ISRAEL MIGHT HAVE HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE MATTER. WELL, SAID MEHTA, THAT WAS WHAT HE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED NOT TO SAY. TO WHICH BUSINESS MANAGER FLEISCHMANN ADDED THAT THERE WAS NEVER ANY QUESTION OF LAPO GOING TO USSR WITHOUT ITS MUSICAL DIRECTOR. PRESS CONFERENCE, WHICH HAD LASTED ABOUT HALF AN HOUR, ENDED SHORTLY THEREAFTER.

3. MORE IMPORTANT HAPPENING TOOK PLACE DURING INTERMISSION AT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 SOFIA 02587 080905Z

LAPO'S FINAL PERFORMANCE DECEMBER 7. STREET AREA OUTSIDE BACKSTAGE

ENTRANCE WAS THRONGED WITH STUDENTS AND OTHERS WHO HAD BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAIN TICKETS. (FEW TICKETS HAD ACTUALLY BEEN PLACED ON SALE; MOST HAD BEEN ALLOTTED BY GOB THROUGH UNIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS.) CONVERSATIONS WERE STRUCK UP BETWEEN THOSE OUTSIDE THE OPEN DOOR AND MUSICIANS INSIDE. MUSICIANS INVITED STUDENTS TO ENTER AND WATCH CONCERT FROM WINGS OR BACK OF THE HALL, BUT THEATER PERSONNEL BLOCKED ENTRANCE, CITING FIRE REGULATIONS. TEMPERS FRAYED AND MATTERS QUICKLY ESCALATED. THEATER MANAGEMENT CALLED POLICE WHO REMOVED STUDENTS (MUSICIANS SAY "ROUGHLY," OTHER AMERICAN WITNESSES SAY POLICE BEHAVED MUCH AS THEY WOULD IN NEW YORK OR PARIS). AT THAT POINT MEHTA AND FLEISCHMANN GOT INTO SHOUTING MATCH WITH THEATER AND SOFIACONCERT PERSONNEL AND THREATENED TO ABORT CONCERT UNLESS STUDENTS RELEASED AND ALLOWED TO ENTER HALL. WE ARE NOT SURE WHO MADE THE (UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES WISE) DECISION, BUT STUDENTS WERE RELEASED AND ABOUT FIFTEEN ALLOWED TO ENTER THROUGH BACKSTAGE ENTRANCE.

4. INCIDENT DELAYED SECOND HALF OF CONCERT BY ABOUT TWENTY-FIVE MINUTES. IT WAS OBVIOUS TO THEATER AUDIENCE (AS IT MUST HAVE BEEN TO THOSE LISTENING TO LIVE BROADCAST VIA RADIO SOFIA) THAT SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED, PARTICULARLY SINCE MUSICIANS WHO WERE ON STAGE TUNING UP PICKED UP THEIR INSTRUMENTS AND WENT BACK OFFSTAGE DURING THE LONG PAUSE.

5. COMMENT: SOFIACONCERT PEOPLE WERE CLEARLY VERY DISTRAUGHT SINCE THIS IS THE KIND OF INCIDENT WHICH CAN EASILY RUIN CAREERS HERE. OTHER BULGARIAN OFFICIALS MAY PERCEIVE THE EVENT AS A "PROVOCATION". THAT THE INCIDENT CAN AFFECT FUTURE US CULTURAL PROGRAMMING IN BULGARIA IS ALSO OBVIOUS. IN DAMAGE LIMITATION EFFORT, I AM TELEPHONING DIRECTOR OF SOFIACONCERT TODAY TO SAY HOW SORRY I AM ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED. DEPT AND OTHER ADDRESSEES SHOULD NOTE LA TIMES REPORTER MURRAY SEEGAR (WHO HAS JUST BEEN REFUSED CZECH ENTRY VISA) WAS BACKSTAGE AND OBSERVED ENTIRE INCIDENT.
HERZ

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ullricre
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976SOFIA02587
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760453-0426
From: SOFIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761262/aaaacbd1.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION CU
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ullricre
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <09 AUG 2004 by ullricre>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLITICAL ASPECTS OF LAPO VISIT TO SOFIA
TAGS: OEXC, PINS, BU, LAPO
To: PRAGUE STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006